

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Chief Mark Little Bear,
High Chief of the United Eastern Lenape Nation,
Middle Division Inc.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that this legislative body pause in its deliberations to remember one of the outstanding men in the history of our state, Chief Mark Little Bear, High Chief of the Eastern Middle Division Inc. Lenape Nation; and

WHEREAS, the son of Emerson and Susie Lay Marcum, Chief Little Bear could trace his Native American heritage back to his great-grandparents, Big Bear and Martha Ellen; and

WHEREAS, Harold Marcum was given the Indian name, Little Bear, by his grandmother, Prudy Mathis; the family name Marcum was adopted by his grandfather, Simeon Tree, as he was raised by the Marcum family who found him hiding in the woods at age three to escape from what would later be called "The Trail of Tears"; and

WHEREAS, Chief Little Bear was raised in Straight Fork, Tennessee, until, at the age of fourteen, he left to work in the West Virginia coal mines; and

WHEREAS, Little Bear served valiantly in the United States Army and was a supervisor in the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s; and

WHEREAS, a knowledgeable and versatile man, Chief Little Bear worked as an architectural engineer in Oak Ridge during the Second World War, owned a sand company on the Holston River and operated a dairy farm in Sweetwater until his retirement in 1970; and

WHEREAS, in 1979, Chief Little Bear was appointed village chief for the Tennessee portion of the United Eastern Lenape Nation and, in 1983, he was selected to serve on the 20,000-member Nation's high council; and

WHEREAS, for years, Little Bear gave unreservedly of himself to enhance the employment opportunities for local people of Indian descent and spent a great deal of time trying to secure federal funds to provide schooling for Native Americans; and

WHEREAS, always placing the best interests of others ahead of their own, Chief Little Bear and his wife, Donna Laughing Fawn, were instrumental in obtaining food, clothing, and health care for Native Americans and the needy in their home county; and

WHEREAS, Little Bear and Laughing Fawn gathered and distributed free clothing to the less fortunate and secured and promoted a recent visit from the Remote Area Medical Team to provide health care to poor Scott Countians; and

WHEREAS, although Chief Mark Little Bear has relinquished this life for a far greater existence, he leaves behind words of wisdom in the form of a prayer that will serve as an inspiration for generations to come:

A PRAYER OF A LENAPE CHIEF

O, Great Spirit, whose voice I hear in the winds and whose breath gives life to all the world, hear me! I am small and weak, I need your strength and wisdom.

Let me walk in beauty, and make my eyes ever behold the red and purple sunset.

Make my hands respect the things you have made and my ears sharp to hear your voice.

Make me wise so that I may understand the things you have taught my people.

Let me learn the lessons you have hidden in every leaf and rock.

I seek strength, not to be greater than my brother, but to fight my greatest enemy - myself.

Make me always ready to come to you with clean hands and straight eyes, so when life fades, as the fading sunset, my spirit may come to you without shame.

O, Great Spirit, when life ends on mother earth, go with me across that border into that great unknown land (Happy Hunting Ground) where no man or creature has ever returned:
Amen.

WHEREAS, Chief Mark Little Bear will be remembered as a wise, widely-respected and honorable man in our great state for many years to come and the legacy of his generosity and selfless ways will likely live forever in Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NINETY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That we hereby pause to mourn the passing of Chief Mark Little Bear, while also celebrating the life of this great man who meant so much to Scott County and our state.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we hereby express our heartfelt condolences to Chief Little Bear's loving wife, Donna Laughing Fawn; their son, Harold A. "Tony Bear" Marcum; daughter, Barbara Neubert; three stepchildren and their grandchildren.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.

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